

When Karen Met Jane by Noodless

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: F/M

Language: English

Characters: Eleven | Jane Hopper, Holly Wheeler, Jim Hopper, Jonathan Byers (mentioned), Joyce Byers (mentioned), Karen Wheeler, Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Ted Wheeler, Will Byers

Relationships: Eleven | Jane Hopper & Karen Wheeler, Eleven | Jane Hopper & Nancy Wheeler, Eleven | Jane Hopper/Mike Wheeler, Holly Wheeler & Mike Wheeler, Jonathan Byers/Nancy Wheeler (Mentioned), Karen Wheeler & Mike Wheeler, Karen Wheeler & Nancy Wheeler, Mike Wheeler & Holly Wheeler & Nancy Wheeler

Status: Completed

Published: 2018-09-02

Updated: 2018-09-02

Packaged: 2022-04-23 02:34:17

Rating: General Audiences

Warnings: Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings

Chapters: 1

Words: 3,261

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

El comes over for dinner and Karen, like any sensible soul, falls in love with her and Mike's relationship with her.

When Karen Met Jane

Author's Note:

I absolutely hate the title, but I spent twenty minutes thinking about it and I couldn't;t think of anything good. If any one has any suggestions, please, I'm desperate.

Karen Wheeler was preparing dinner when she heard the screeches of her youngest child. Panicking she dropped the onion she had in her hand and raced up the stairs to the bedroom, what she saw made her pause and put a wide smile on her face.

“Come on, Holly, give it back, give it back!” Mike was saying as he tickled his little sister. Karen stood there, a small smile on her face for a few minutes until she heard her oldest daughter open her door down the hall. The two stared at each other, a little awkwardly, for a few moments, before Nancy walked down the hallway and joined her mother.

“You know it’s a little creepy when you just stand here staring at them,” Nancy whispered as they watched. Holly had gotten away from Mike and had started to run around the room, attempting to get away. The two were smiling and laughing and it made Karen so happy, she felt a lump forming in her throat.

Nancy stared at her mom, a hesitant smile on her face. Now was as good a time as any to drop the dinner bomb on her.

“Hey, Mom.”

“Yes, sweetie?” She responded without taking her eyes off of Mike and Holly.

“Did Mike tell you about his friend that’s coming over for dinner tonight?” Karen tore her gaze away from the two younger ones to stare at tNancy, before walking down the hall, Nancy following closely behind.

"No," Karen loved all her son's friends, the boys were great, but every time Mike gave her a several hours of a heads up, unless they came straight after school, "Who is it?"

"You haven't met them." Karen raised her eyebrow at this.

"Have I at least heard of him?"

"Her, and yeah," Karen's eyes went wide, she didn't know Mike hung out with any girls, "she's the chief's new adopted daughter, Jane, she's pretty awesome," Nancy smiled. Mike had made Nancy promise not to tell their parents about how Eleven and him were kind-of-sort-of dating, his words.

"Since when did the boys start hanging out with any girls?" Karen voiced her thoughts as she and Nancy entered the kitchen.

"Just recently, and the girls they hang out with are different, they're pretty bad ass." Karen gave her daughter a stern look at the sound of the curse to which Nancy smiled back sheepishly.

"And you just said girls, there's more than one?"

"Just one, her name's Max, she's dating Lucas," Karen nearly dropped the knife she had just picked up.

"Dating? Please tell me Mike isn't dating this Jane, please, he's to young," Karen looked at her daughter sternly, making Nancy feel guilty for the lie she was bound to have to tell.

"Mom, Mike's fourteen in a week, I went on my first date at twelve, and you drove us," Nancy almost didn't deny it, but when she saw the slightly terrified look on her mom's face she decided the lie was probably best, "But it doesn't even matter, they aren't dating." Karen let out a sigh of relief.

"But could you not tell any of the boys I told you about Lucas and Max. They don't like saying they're dating, but they totally are, and the boys are all very protective of each other, you know..." Karen nodded, glad her daughter had confided in her sensitive information about someone's love life, even if it wasn't her's.

"Nancy..."

Yeah, Mom?"

"Are you dating anyone?" Nancy sighed. She'd been dating Jonathan for three months, but she still hadn't told her parents.

"I... No... I would tell you if I was, obviously! I've changed since last year with Steve, Mom."

"Nancy..." Nancy looked up at her mother, who she hadn't made eye contact with since she asked the question, "Please don't lie to me." Nancy gave a sigh of defeat.

"Okay... I am, I'm dating some one but I really don't want you to get mad, or tell Dad, please!" Karen looked at her daughter, a littler worried of who she might be seeing.

"I've been dating Jonathan..." a smile spread across Karen's face, "it's been about three months..." the smile slowly disappeared at the knowledge that her daughter had been keeping this information from her for so long.

"Three months? Does Joyce know?" Karen looked at her daughter, silently hoping the answer was no. Nancy looked back at the ground.

"Yes," Nancy whispered, looking up through her eyelashes at her mother.

Karen felt like a weight was being pressed down on her chest. She had thought her kids had been telling her everything for the past few months, she thought she had started building a close relationship with her children, it turns out she hadn't. Karen wanted to be angry about it, but all she felt was a crushing disappointment. How could she have been so naive to think that? She clearly would never get that kind of relationship with them.

"Is that where you go when you say one of your friend's has invited you over for dinner?" Nancy nodded, still not looking up at her. Karen felt tears prick the corner's of her eyes.

"Is that where you where headed until dinner?" Nancy nodded again, a wave of guilt washing over her, she hadn't wanted to tell her mother that she wasn't planning on coming home for dinner. After

what felt like an eternity of silence, Karen finally spoke to her daughter.

“Dinner is starting at 6, if you are not back by then you are eating at the Byers’ or not eating at all.” Nancy looked up at her mom, she had thought for sure she was grounded for at least a month.

“You’re not mad?” Karen shook her head, and that’s when Nancy noticed the tear starting to fall from her mother’s eyes.

“Not mad at all dear.” Nancy looked at her mom sadly, and even though she wanted to so badly, she didn’t leave.

She did however stand up and make her way to the telephone. She stared at her mom, who wouldn’t look at her daughter, as she dialed the number she knew so well.

“Hello?” Will’s voice rang through Nancy’s ears, which made her smile.

“Hey, Will, is Jonathan home?” Nancy could hear Will’s smile as he responded.

“No, but he will be home before you get here, are you still staying for dinner?”

“I actually can’t make it, I’m sorry. My mom needs me, I’ll come over for dinner sometime next week, okay?”

“Okay,” Nancy could hear the disappointment in the boy’s voice, but the fact that her mother was looking up at her, tears still present, made the decision crystal clear, “I’ll let Jonathan and my mom know, they’ll be a little sad, my mom was getting your favorite.” Nancy gave a sad smile into the phone.

“Tell them I’m really sorry, but my mom really needs me, Jane’s coming over for dinner tonight.”

“Jane?” She could tell Will was understanding what she was trying to say before the boy laughed, “Yeah, you’re mom really does need you. She might kill her if she finds out they’re dating.”

“Exactly, thank you for letting them know, and I’ll probably see you tomorrow after school, Jonathan’s still giving you and Mike a ride to your place after school, right?” They kept the conversation light for the next minute or two, double and triple checking the plans for after school before Nancy said goodbye to Will.

“Nancy?” Karen spoke softly, Nancy turned to facing her mother, who was now standing just a few feet in front of her.

“Yeah, Mom?”

“Thank you,” Karen leaned over and gave her daughter a long, tight hug.

“So, what do I need to do for dinner?” Nancy asked as the two pulled away from each other. Karen smiled and soon Nancy was standing side by side with her mother, chopping onions as her mother cut the carrots.

About ten minutes later, Mike came down the steps, carrying Holly in his arms.

“Hey, Nance, Mom,” he spoke, setting down his baby sister, “Is there anything I can do?” Karen looked at her son in disbelief. First Nancy, now Mike? Who were these kids? But she wasn’t about to turn down free help.

“Of course. Could you and Holly start setting the table? And once you’re done with that, you could pick out and make Kool-Aid to go with dinner.” Mike’s eyes lit up, Karen never let the kids pick out the Kool-Aid.

“How come Mike gets to pick out the Kool-Aid?” Nancy turned to her mom in fake anger, Karen’s mouth started to twitch up in a smile.

“You can pick it out tomorrow, his friend is coming over for dinner tonight, and he did ask how he could help.” Mike looked at Nancy, and very smugly puffed out his chest, Nancy responded by sticking out her tongue.

“But I asked what I could do to help first!” Nancy fake whined and Karen gave her daughter a smiling stern look. Nancy and Mike

continued to quarrel until he had set out all of the plates.

Karen watched silently as Mike and Holly set out the silver ware. Mike would put down the fork, as Holly, standing right behind him, picked them back up and handed them back to her brother as they went around the table. This happened about four times before Mike finally wised up. He picked his sister up, who had begun laughing like a maniac somewhere during the fourth lap, and set her down on the sofa.

“You!” Mike spoke poking her cheek for emphasis “Stay here. I’ll be back over to play with you really soon, I promise.”

After that, it took him about five minutes to finish the table, pick out, and make the Kool-Aid, After he finished, as promised, he returned to Holly, who was sitting patiently where he had left her on the couch.

Karen smiled as she watched her son pick up Holly, fling her over his shoulder, and start running around the house, her daughter giggling the entire time. After a few minutes, Mike ran to the front door, grabbed the handle and was about to open it, when she called out to him.

“Dinner is going to be ready in ten minutes, the two of you better be back in eight so you can wash up.” Mike nodded before throwing the door open and running outside, Holly still giggling on his shoulder.

Karen shook her head before turning to Nancy, who was trying to hide the big smile on her face.

Karen turned back to the vegetables she was cutting. The two continued to put the finishing touches on dinner in a comfortable silence when they heard a knock on the door.

“It must be Jane,” Nancy spoke, “I’ll get it.” She rushed to the door so that Karen wouldn’t make it there first. She opened the door and was greeted with the sight of the chief with the very adorable girl.

“Jane!” Nancy spoke and reached down to engulf the girl in a hug. Jane smiled as she returned the hug, as the two pulled away, she asked the question Nancy knew was coming.

“Mike?” Karen smiled over her daughter’s shoulder.

“Mike went out to play with Holly, he should be back any minute.” Karen spoke kindly to the girl. Jane gave a small nod and gave Hopper a hug goodbye before following Nancy into the living room to sit down.

“I’ll be back at eight to pick her up, call me if she causes any trouble, I’ll be at the Byers’ for dinner.” Karen gave the chief a knowing look.

“If you have something to say Karen...” Hopper spoke, clearly irritated by the look.

“Have you asked her out yet?” Hopper’s face turned very red at Karen’s question.

“I... I don’t know what you’re talking about.” Hopper stammered, to embarrassed.

“Jim, I might not know very much, but I do know I’m not a complete dumbass. I am standing here, right here in front of you, living proof that if you don’t act on your feelings you’ll never be as happy as you could be.” Hopper gave Karen a sad half smile. They stared at each other for a few moments longer than was really comfortable for them before Hopper broke the gaze by coughing a few time.

“Thank you, Karen, I’ll keep that in mind...” Karen gave him a soft smile.

“You’re very welcome. And I hope to hear you’ve asked Joyce on a date when you come to pick up Jane.” Hopper nodded.

“You probably won’t, Karen, but thank you for being blunt, I really do appreciate that.”

“Anytime, Jim,” Karen spoke, leaning against the doorframe as he walked across the grass to his car. Right as he closed his door, Mike rounded the corner of the house, a very happy Holly on his shoulders. Karen smiled as she called out to her son.

“Jane’s here!” Mike’s eyes went wide and he began running, which made the girl on his shoulders laugh even louder. The three walked

into the house and Mike quickly put Holly down.

“El,” Mike spoke softly as he walked over to his sister and the girl, who both had their backs to him. At the sound of her name, she turned around and smiled.

“Mike,” she stood up and walked over to Mike and the two embraced. As they pulled apart he spoke softly, probably so Karen wouldn’t hear, but she did.

“You look beautiful.” Karen smiled, placing a hand on her chest maybe her son was too young to date, but he was being so sweet with this girl. Suddenly they heard a car come rumbling up the drive way.

“Well, it sounds like you’re father’s home, everyone go get washed up, we’re going to start dinner in a few minutes.” Karen ushered the kids out of the living room.

A few minutes later they were all sitting around the dining room table, eating quietly. Mike looked up at Jane and they shared a smile.

“Jane, could you pass the Kool-Aid?” Nancy spoke. The young girl looked up and over to Nancy sheepishly. She gently picked up the container of Kool-Aid and as soon as she felt it come off the table she could tell it would drop. She should have tried to stop it, but it seemed to happen in slow motion and fast forward at the same time.

After it fell (most of it on her) she looked around at the rest of the people at the table, tears of embarrassment forming in her eyes. Mike was down on her knees in front of her in a split second as Nancy got up to grab a towel from the kitchen.

“Are you okay, El?” Mike spoke, staring intently into the girl’s eyes concern painted all of his face. Nancy quickly returned with the towel and Mike grabbed it from her and started to dab at the beautiful white dress, that was now staining yellow. Jane nodded her head, the tears beginning to slowly fall from the corners of her eyes. Karen sat staring at her son, who was this boy? Being so sweet. It was the most adorable thing she had ever seen.

"El, it's okay, it's just Kool-Aid, we'll have it cleaned up real quick," Mike spoke before turning to his mom, "Nancy, could you take El up and get her somethings else to wear, I don't think she wants to stain her dress." Karen looked at her daughter curiously.

"Of course, come on, Jane," Nancy beckoned to the young girl, "Let's get those clothes off of you and into the wash."

When Nancy and Jane came back down a few minutes later, Jane was in an old, slightly tattered dress of Nancy's, but looking at Mike's face you would have thought she walked out in a beautiful ballgown. Jane looked up at him, clearly nervous.

"Still beautiful?" Mike nodded eagerly.

"Very beautiful." At that Jane stood up straighter and gave a wide grin. Karen looked up at her daughter, and the two of them shared a large smile of their own. It was at this point Ted looked up from his plate, and looked around, noticing there was no longer any one sitting at the table.

"Where'd everybody go?" The group of four all looked at each other quizzically before Nancy and Mike started laughing.

Hopper was back at eight o'clock sharp and Ted was, to Karen's surprise, the first to the door.

"Chief Hopper, to what do we owe this pleasure?" He asked.

"I'm here to pick up my daughter? Jane? She's here isn't she?" He leaned into the room and waved to Karen who gave a small smile and wave back before shaking the young girl awake, who had fallen asleep on her son's shoulder while watching TV.

Karen then stood up and walked over to the chief as Ted returned to his spot on the lazy boy.

"She had to borrow some of Nancy's old clothes, there was a spill at dinner so we had to put her clothes in the wash. Mike can bring them to school tomorrow and give them back to her..." Karen began

speaking as Jane and Mike said their goodbyes on the sofa.

"I don't think she likes me, Karen." Hopper interrupted, not looking up at Karen, which made her heart ache slightly for her old friend.

"Oh... Why do you say that?" Hopper looked up at Karen and shrugged his shoulders.

"She talked about Bob almost all of dinner, and anytime I tried to steer the conversation elsewhere, she managed to bring it back to him." Karen gave Hopper a sad look, which made him roll his eyes. Hopper took this opportunity to glance over at Mike and Jane, who had begun to slowly make their way over to the adults.

"Please don't tell anyone about this... this talk we had, Karen, please."

"Don't want her to know in case it doesn't work out?" Hopper nodded at the woman's question, "It's going to happen, Hopper, trust me." Karen spoke kindly as Mike and Jane finally made it to the door.

"What's going to happen?" Mike asked. Karen looked from Hopper to her son with a knowing smile.

"Just boring politic stuff." Mike rolled his eyes, he knew his mom was lying, but he didn't feel like pushing it. Hopper gave her a grateful look before turning to his daughter.

"Ready to go, kiddo?" Jane smiled softly and nodded.

"Bye, Mike," she waved sheepishly before turning and walking out the door, she didn't make it very far before she turned around and ran back into Mike's arms, giving him a bone crushing hug, which he gladly returned. Karen looked at them, a warm feeling spreading in her chest. The two of them were adorable.

Five minutes later Hopper finally managed to get his daughter out the door without having her run back to her friend's arms, and gave Karen a sheepish, apologetic smile. Karen laughed it off and waved goodbye to them as they opened the car doors. Karen's smile continued as she closed the door and joined her children on the

couch. She sat down directly next to her son and stared at him a few moments, smile still wide as he joked with his sister. Finally, she opened her mouth to speak

“So, Mike...” the boy turned to face his mother at the sound of her voice.

“When’s the wedding?”

Author's Note:

I wrote this a while ago, and I've been having trouble with my rewrite of Chapter 2 of my Caleo story, so I thought I'd edit this and post it, finally. I hope you like it.